

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Jean-Luc Bennahmias, Claire Gibault, Catherine Trautmann, Helga Trüpel
and Henri Weber

on the difficulties encountered by non-European artists and cultural operators
in entering European territory

Lapse date: 14.9.2007

Written declaration on the difficulties encountered by non-European artists and cultural operators in entering European territory

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas an increasing number of non-European artists and cultural operators are being refused visas and entry into European territory even though they are in possession of contracts of employment or official invitations from European institutions or contractors,
- B. whereas there are arbitrary differences in the application of rules of admission or the refusals of entry to non-EU artists within the Schengen area,
- C. having regard to the defence of cultural diversity, freedom of movement of artists and works of art, and the European Union's solidarity with emerging countries,
- D. whereas the presence of non-European artistic productions in Europe can serve to strengthen cultural diversity and tolerance, and help in the fight against xenophobia, whilst also promoting economic consolidation, cooperation and development,
- 1. Calls for an immediate end to refusals to issue visas to foreign artists and cultural operators in possession of contracts of employment and official invitations from the European Union,
- 2. Calls for an immediate end to refusals of all or some members of orchestras, companies, troupes, bands or groups of artists on the grounds that one particular member does not meet the requirements for a Schengen visa, a practice which goes against the rule of law,
- 3. Calls on the Member States to agree on integrated and harmonised procedures to be applied in response to such visa requests,
- 4. Calls for the establishment of an appeals and conciliation body in the EU,
- 5. Calls for the creation of a platform for international cooperation, in association with Europe's own think-tanks, decision-making and programming bodies, with a view to establishing jointly the rules on freedom of movement in the field of arts and culture and to consolidating the economic growth in this domain;
- 6. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.